

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 and 36-41 are currently pending in the application. Claims 2, 3, 8, 36 and 37 are hereby cancelled. Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 USC §102 as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,103,349 (Matsumoto). Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 USC §103 as obvious over Matsumoto in view of Japanese Patent Publication No. 10252833 (JP '833). Claims 4-7, 9-20, 38-41 stand rejected under 35 USC §103 as obvious over Matsumoto in view of JP '833, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,997,994, to Andrews et al (Andrews).

Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1, 4-7, 9-20 and 38-41 is requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney wishes to thank Examiner Charles for the courtesies extended him at the interview on February 26, 2004. It is noted that the Interview Summary identifies February 25 as the date of the interview. However, the interview took place on February 26th. The amendments made to the claims herein were discussed during the interview. As noted in the Interview Summary, the Examiner agreed that the claims, with these changes, patentably distinguish over the prior art.

It was pointed out to the Examiner that Matsumoto does not teach or suggest the application of information on belt side surfaces in a manner that would cause alteration of the side surfaces, as by the formation of depressions in the side surfaces. Matsumoto teaches applying information using a separately attached "hiding layer" and alternatively "printing" as discussed in column 3 in the paragraph beginning on line 42 to avoid having to effect any alteration of the belt side surfaces.

Application of information to a belt, as by alteration the belt side surface as claimed by the applicant, is not obvious from the prior art. JP '833 teaches the formation of a

depression in a belt, but only on the backside surface rather than on side surfaces of the belt. Applicant's invention represents a novel manner of applying information on a power transmission belt that deviates from conventional techniques, such as Matsumoto's, which avoids any alteration of a belt side surface, as by the formation of depressions. By inscribing a belt side surface to apply information, the information tends to remain legible over a substantial running period and is situated to be highly visible. While Matsumoto appreciated the desirability of applying information on the side surfaces of a belt, Matsumoto did not appreciate that the side surfaces could be altered to produce a lasting mark without significantly compromising the performance of the associated belt.

Entry of the amendment, reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1, 4-7, 9-20 and 38-41, and allowance of the case are requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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